Alfred Stubbs

A Pastoral Letter
in reference to charge
of "False Representations,"
made against the bishop
of New Jersey

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A PASTORAL LETTER

BY THE

REV. ALFRED STUBBS,

IN REFERENCE TO

Charge of "False Representations,"

MADE AGAINST

THE BISHOP OF NEW-JERSEY.

1852.

A

PASTORAL LETTER

TO THE

Parishioners of Christ Church,

NEW-BRUNSWICK,

IN REFERENCE TO

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THE CHARGE OF "FALSE REPRESENTATIONS"

PREFERRED BY FOUR LAYMEN OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW-JERSEY,

AGAINST THEIR BISHOP.

BY THE REV. ALFRED STUBBS.

New-Brunswick:
A. ACKERMAN, PUBLISHER,
No. 5 Peace-Street.

1852.

EXTRACT

FROM

BISHOP DOANE'S PROTEST,

APPEAL AND REPLY—P. 26.

"As little does the undersigned admit the justice of the complaints of the four laymen, that he has avoided, or has not invited an investigation; and that he has been silent under reproach. He never has avoided an investigation. Why should he invite an investigation? He was satisfied with his own sincerity and honesty. His diocese was satisfied. His parishioners were satisfied. His friends everywhere were satisfied. Why should he not keep silence under reproach? He considered who reproached him. He considered how they did it. He was willing to let Shimei curse. For his silence, he had David's pattern—"as for me, I was like a deaf man, and heard not; and as one that is dumb, who doth not open his mouth. I became even as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs"—and the pattern of the Lord

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WITHDRAWN

of David, "who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." Who will say that he was ever, heretofore, so charged, that he could answer? Who will say, that now, three responsible persons adopt the charges, even of four, and they such charges, he has delayed to answer? To all, and singular, though false, calumnious, and malignant, he now addresses his reply. And he can truly say, with the three holy children to the king—"We are not careful to answer thee in this matter." To such charges, so sustained, it gives him no concern to make reply. The Lord judge between him and them, who have so shamefully entreated him!

CHARGE I.—Obtaining money under false representations, or false promises.

SPECIFICATION.—He obtained money, amounting to $1,000, of the Rev. Alfred Stubbs, Treasurer of the Society "for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge and Piety," under a representation or promise that he would give safe and ample security for the same; and he has not returned the money, nor given security therefor.

To the Members of Christ Church, New-Brunswick.

Beloved Brethren and Friends:

Notice has been already given you of the call of "a special convention of the Church in this State;" and you have doubtless read "Bishop Doane's Protest and Appeal, as aggrieved," by three of his Right Reverend Brethren, and his "Reply to the false, calumnious, and malignant representations" of four laymen of this Diocese, who have preferred charges against their Bishop, and requested the Bishops of Virginia, Maine, and Ohio, to "make inquiry into the truth of reports in relation to him, in order that they may determine whether it may not be proper to institute a trial."

It probably struck you with as much astonishment as it did myself, to find my own name mentioned first in that list of charges, wherein Bishop Doane is accused of "obtaining money from me, under false representations, or false promises."

As you are, I am persuaded, deeply interested

in my personal welfare, as well as in that of your Bishop, it is due to you, not less than to him and myself, not to speak of the Church, in which he holds so distinguished an office, that I should publish a correct statement of the facts in this case, lest, by my silence, I should seem to acknowledge the accuracy of the charge. You may then judge for yourselves, with what truth it has been asserted, that Bishop Doane obtained money from me, "under false representations, or false promises."

In the month of October, 1848, I received from the former Treasurer of "The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge and Piety," whom I had been chosen to succeed, the sum of $1,000. It was my duty to invest that money on good security, at legal interest.

As the Society was organized for the purpose of promoting "Christian Knowledge and Piety" in the diocese, it occurred to me that its funds could not be applied to better use than to have them invested in such a manner as would at once secure the principal and interest, and further advance the beneficent object for which the association was formed.

The Bishop, I knew, was engaged, heart and

soul, in the great work of Christian education; it was equally certain that funds were necessary for the successful accomplishment of his noble design. Of my own accord, therefore, I offered him this money as soon as it was received, telling him, at the same time, that I preferred he should have it, on condition of giving me proper security. He thanked me for my kind consideration, but declined receiving the money until he had the opportunity of a night's reflection. The next morning, he said he would take the sum which had been offered; and immediately wrote a receipt for the same, accompanying the receipt with the promise that he would give me "satisfactory security without delay." Accordingly, soon after his return to Burlington, he sent me his Bond, with *a power of attorney attached.* This, as is well known, authorized me, by a summary process of law, to enter judgment at any time after the day of payment mentioned in the said bond or obligation, which was thirty days, and instantly recover the money loaned.

Now, observe, the bishop made no representation to me of any sort. I asked for none. I did not stipulate with him for any particular kind of

security. I did not say what would, or would not be deemed by me *satisfactory* security. It would have been better for him and myself had I done so; and here I may have laid myself open to the charge of culpable neglect. But let it be remembered, that I, a presbyter of the Church, was dealing with my Bishop, in whom I had implicit confidence. I did not suspect him then, any more than I do now, of falsehood or fraud; neither of which has he committed. At the time this security was given, it was unquestionably good. I did not, however, feel perfectly satisfied with it, as in case of a change in his circumstances, it might not prove available, and I determined to acquaint the Bishop with this view of the case.

As he was then engaged in visiting a distant portion of his diocese, and there was no need of pressing the matter, it was suffered to rest for a few months; but early in the January following, I addressed him on the subject, and requested that other arrangements might be made.

While on the way to put this letter in the post-office, a gentleman of the city informed me that Bishop Doane was dangerously ill, and supposed to be in a dying state. Of course, the

letter was not sent, but retained for a more suitable season. Ere the Bishop had sufficiently recovered to attend to business, unexpected circumstances rendered it necessary for me to visit the West Indies; and during my absence, his failure unfortunately occurred.

Immediately on my return, the letter which had been written some months before, was forwarded to the Bishop, accompanied by another, in which he was urged to relieve my mind from anxiety relative to this business. He replied in these words: "The bond which you hold, at the time it was given, was, I believe, a competent security for the money. Such security is often given and received in this part of the state. I do not know that it is not throughout the state. The course of events which followed my severe and dangerous illness has changed the character of the security. At the same time it has put it out of my power to substitute another. You will not infer that I regard the debt as in the slightest degree endangered thereby. It is of that sacred character which demands, and will receive, the earliest liquidation." This letter was dated July 12th, 1849. Since then, the bishop has communicated with me several times on the

subject, and he informed me, at the last Convention, that he had at length succeeded in making such arrangements, through a third party, to whom he referred me, as to furnish me with other kind of security. So that this claim is now in the course of being finally settled.

Now, where can you find in all this transaction anything like "a false representation, or a false promise?" Bear in mind, that the Bishop did not know before his failure that I was dissatisfied with the security he had given; it was even better than that which others were ready to take from him; it was such as was deemed amply sufficient, inasmuch as it empowered me to exact immediate payment of the money; and ever since his attention has been called to the matter, he has been endeavoring to satisfy my demands.

Judge now, whether the charge of "false representation" belongs more strictly to him, or to his accusers! Judge for yourselves, what degree of credit is due to men who can make such a charge as this, without first ascertaining all the facts in the case! Judge what manner of regard is due to men who can thus attempt, on such grounds as these, to destroy the character and usefulness of a Christian bishop, and involve a presbyter—

who never exchanged a word with one of them —in the odium of being in their confidence, or having their acquaintance!

It ought to be said, however, in behalf of these persons, that they seem not to have been voluntary instruments in this wicked proceeding.

It is evident, from the present case, as well as from the other charges which the Bishop has exposed, that they have not bestowed upon this business the care and investigation which its importance demanded; they have probably signed the communication to the Bishops of Virginia, Maine and Ohio, without duly considering its import, and examining the charges and specifications which it contained.

Three, if not four of them, have most likely been misled by the representations of another party, whose sacred office might have been supposed a sufficient guarantee for the truth of his assertions. If such be the case,—if the persons who have become accusers of their Bishop, have, as we may charitably believe, been misled and deceived, let them be entreated, in the Name of God, to come forward with honest manliness, and disavow the charges they have ignorantly and thoughtlessly preferred against him.

Let them be entreated to leave the crooked paths, in which they have been led astray, lest they incur the "woe" denounced against those "who have gone in the way of Cain, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah."

I have no further personal concern with these "false representations," nor should I have said a word in the instance before us, had I not been apprehensive that my silence might be misinterpreted to the Bishop's disadvantage; especially as he has not done himself full justice in his reply to this, the first and the gravest of the charges preferred against him. The expectation may surely be indulged, that the unsought testimony of an independent witness will avail in his favor with every unprejudiced person; it may be charitably hoped, that it will in some degree "relieve the minds of many anxious and distressed friends," and possibly satisfy "those who may be deemed unfriendly" to him. Is it unreasonable to suppose, that if the first and most grievous charge has been made with so little regard to truth, and with such inexcusable recklessness, the others are based upon no better foundation? From this one, we may easily learn the character of the rest. But these have been all disposed of

by the Bishop himself. He needs little help from me, or from any other hand, in refuting the calumnies with which he has been assailed. His reply, in self-defence, will impress the heart of every man open to conviction, that he is innocent of the crimes laid to his charge.

In commending it, my brethren, to your careful perusal, let me beseech you also to pray with fervency unto the "Lord of all power and might, the Gracious Bishop and Shepherd of our souls," to heal the divisions of His Church; to drive from us the demon of faction and strife; and to "grant that, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, all Christians may be joined together in unity of spirit, and in the bond of peace." May He "defend us from the sins of heresy and schism; let not the foot of pride come nigh to hurt us, nor the hand of the ungodly to cast us down!"

I am,

Very sincerely and affectionately,

Your friend and servant,

ALFRED STUBBS.

Christ Church Parsonage.
FEAST OF ST. MATTHIAS, 1852.

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